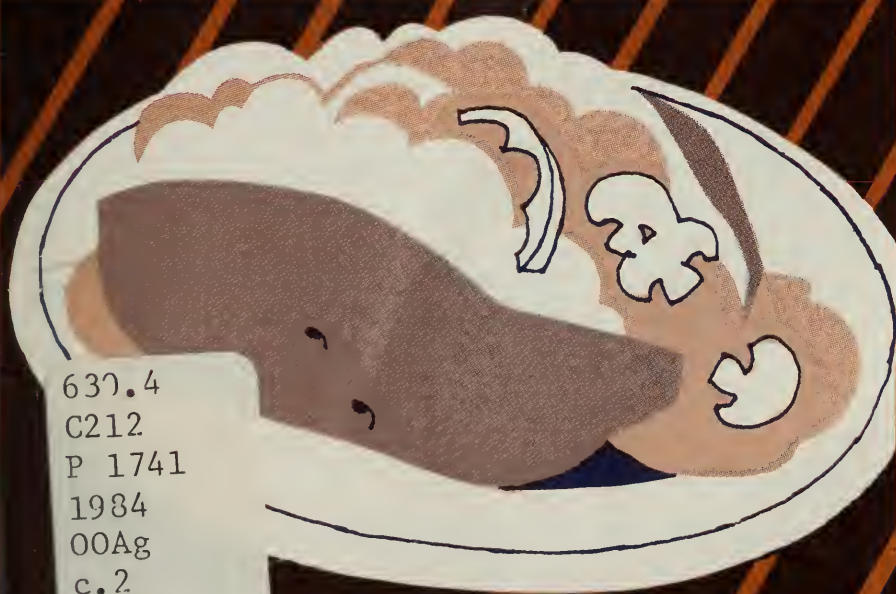




Agriculture
Canada

potatoes now



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The popular potato plays a big part in the Canadian economy. The most important commercial vegetables in the country, potatoes are grown in every province. Available year round, they get served more often and combined with more foods than any other vegetable.

Early explorers to the Americas were the first to introduce Europeans to the potato. Later, in the 18th century, Louis XV of France decided to call it the “pomme de terre”, or apple of the earth, to improve its somewhat earthy image.

The Canadian potato industry dates back to 1623, when colonists grew a small patch at Port Royal in Nova Scotia. Early settlers found the potato a very versatile vegetable — they even used it to make yeast for bread and starch for laundry!

Canada produces about 2.5 million tonnes of potatoes each year. Besides supplying domestic markets, we export large volumes to the United States, Trinidad-Tobago, Venezuela, Barbados and several other countries.

POTATOES ARE NUTRITIOUS!

People often think of potatoes as “fattening”, and consider them taboo on a weight-reducing diet. Nothing could be further from the truth. A medium baked potato supplies only about 100 Calories (380 kJ). It is an economical source of vitamin C, and contains thiamine, iron, folic acid and fiber. With so many nutrients, the potato makes a healthy contribution to *any* daily diet.

If you're weight-conscious, be careful about the toppings used on potatoes. The wrong ones can often add unnecessary calories to your diet. Try one of the following on your baked potato:

- yogurt with chives
- whipped low-fat cottage cheese
- grated Parmesan cheese
- sesame seeds
- chopped onions and mushrooms
- calorie-reduced salad dressings
- melted butter or margarine thinned with lemon juice

THE POTATO CLAN

Potatoes are classified by shape (round or long) and skin or flesh color (white or red). For cooking, however, we divide them into “new”, bakers and all-purpose. New potatoes are never stored commercially but move directly from the field to market. They are generally harvested

when quite small and have a thin, feathered skin that breaks easily. They are more perishable and bruise more easily than the later arrivals. New potatoes must be refrigerated and used within 1 week for best flavor and nutrition. Bakers tend to be uniform in shape and size, with a mealy texture. As the name implies, all-purpose potatoes are used for general cooking. They are usually small, round and less expensive than sized bakers.

Varieties available across Canada

Kennebec (round) — all-purpose

Russett Burbank (long) — exceptional baking and frying qualities

Sebago (smaller, round) — holds shape well; for boiling and salads

Varieties available regionally

Irish Cobbler (round)

Green Mountain (round)

Katahdin (round)

Keswick (round)

Norland (red, round)

Norgold (long)

Federal and provincial regulations govern the grading, packing and marketing. Potatoes are graded according to size, shape, maturity and relative freedom from dirt, injuries, blemishes and disease. They are not graded for cooking quality.

Canada No. 1 2¼" to 3½" in diameter for round varieties; 2" to 3½" in diameter for long varieties; 60% can be 2¼" in diameter or larger

Canada No. 2 minimum diameter of 1¾" with not less than 75% by weight of the potatoes in the lot to be 2" or larger in diameter

Canada No. 1 Large 3" to 4½" in diameter

Canada No. 1 Small 1½" to 2¼" in diameter

Canada No. 1 New Potatoes Before September 16 of each year, new potatoes may be graded Canada No. 1 if they have a diameter of 1⅞" or larger

The label information must include the common name of the product, net quantity, grade name, size range, name and address of packer or distributor, and country of origin (e.g., product of Canada). To help you choose potatoes for a particular use, some packers are now adding the variety name. The province of origin is often shown as well.

PROCESSED POTATOES

A large portion of the potatoes Canadians eat are processed. With today's busy schedules, these products are

convenient and time saving. Potatoes are processed in all provinces except Saskatchewan and Newfoundland.

Canned potatoes are usually white whole potatoes but can also be sliced, diced, julienne, shoestring, regular or crinkle cut. They are graded Canada Fancy, Canada Choice and Canada Standard. You can eat these potatoes cold or heat them just before serving.

Potatoes are popular at the grocery store frozen food counter. Frozen french fries are graded Canada Fancy and Canada Choice. They come regular or crinkle cut, julienne or shoestring. Other frozen potato products are also available, such as frozen baked stuffed potatoes, potato puffs and hash browns.

Dehydrated potatoes, good for the emergency food shelf, are sold as flakes, granules or slices. Potato chips, potato flour and potato starch are also available.

STORING

Store potatoes in a cool, dark place where air can circulate. At 7° to 10°C (cold storage room) they will last 4 to 9 months; at room temperature they keep 1 week. High temperatures cause potatoes to sprout and shrivel.

Do *not* refrigerate, because this makes sugar build up in the potato. The increased sugar can also cause the potato to overbrown when fried.

Never store potatoes in a nonperforated plastic bag. This creates high humidity that encourages mold.

Keep potatoes away from light. Light makes potatoes turn green and develop an alkaloid called solanin. Sometimes, only the skin is affected, but greening may also go into the flesh. Remove any green portions because solanin gives a bitter flavor to the potato; extremely large amounts can be toxic.

PREPARATION

Cook potatoes in their skins to protect against exposure to air. Air causes loss of vitamin C and thiamine. Peeling and cutting increase this loss.

Don't soak potatoes in water. Water carries away B vitamins, vitamin C and minerals.

Cook potatoes in a small amount of water in a saucepan with the lid on and use the cooking water to make gravies, soups, etc.

Cook potatoes as quickly as possible to reduce vitamin loss. Keep cooked potatoes covered in the refrigerator.

BOIL In a small amount of water (2 cm deep) boil potatoes whole in their skins. If peeling is necessary, remove as little as possible to save the important nutrients just under the skin. Use a heavy saucepan with a tight-fitting lid; a loose lid lets the water boil away. Hard water can give the potatoes a yellow tinge, caused by a pigment in the potato reacting with the minerals in the water. It is harmless. Uncover the saucepan after boiling and drain to prevent soginess. Save the cooking liquid and add to soups and sauces.

BAKE Select medium potatoes of uniform size. Scrub thoroughly. Pierce the skins with a fork before baking or you'll get steamed potatoes. Do not wrap them in foil (unless barbecuing) as this gives you steamed, soggy potatoes. Bake new potatoes at 220°C for 40 to 50 min and others at any of the following temperatures:

220°C	40 to 50 min
190°C	50 to 60 min
160°C	75 to 85 min

After removing from the oven, make a crosswise cut in each potato and pinch to let steam escape.

MICROWAVE BAKE Prepare as for oven-baked potatoes. Remember, the more potatoes in the microwave oven, the longer the cooking time. Microwave at full power, turning potatoes halfway through the cooking time. After removing them from the oven, wrap potatoes in foil and let stand 5 min to complete cooking.

6 potatoes (arrange in circle)	10-13 min
2 potatoes	6-7 min
1 potato	4-6 min

ROAST Parboil potatoes in salted water for 10 min. Drain, then toss potatoes in drippings in roast pan and arrange around roast 45 to 50 min before meat is done. Baste occasionally. Drained, canned whole potatoes may be used in place of parboiled.

MASH Prepare boiled potatoes; drain and peel. Mash with a potato masher, electric mixer or ricer. Do not use a food processor because it makes the texture like glue. Add milk and beat until light and fluffy. The amount of milk used depends on the texture and moistness of the potatoes. If desired, add salt, pepper and butter or margarine to taste. Serve hot. To freeze, shape mashed potatoes in mounds or patties. Freeze on baking sheet. Once frozen, place in freezer bags. Use within 1 month. To re-heat, place frozen mounds on baking sheet. Brush with melted butter or margarine and bake at 220°C until golden brown (about 30 min).

POTATO METRICS

1 kg equals about 6 medium potatoes or 12 small new potatoes

2 medium potatoes yield about 375 mL mashed

4 medium potatoes yield about 800 mL diced

1 medium potato yields about 200 mL thinly sliced

RECIPES

SCALLOPED POTATOES WITH COTTAGE CHEESE

25 mL butter or
margarine

25 mL flour

10 mL salt

1 mL pepper

50 mL skim milk powder

125 mL water

375 mL cottage cheese

1.5 L thinly sliced potatoes

125 mL chopped onion

Melt butter or margarine. Blend in flour, seasonings and skim milk powder. Gradually add water and cottage cheese. Stir and cook until thickened. Add potatoes and onion and bring to boil. Turn into greased baking dish. Cover and bake at 180°C until sauce bubbles (about 45 min). Uncover and continue baking until potatoes are tender (about 45 min). 6 servings.

TO FREEZE Divide mixture in half. Place in 2 small baking dishes linked with foil. Store in freezer up to 2 weeks.

TO REHEAT Remove foil. Place in small baking dish. Cover and bake from frozen state in non-preheated oven at 180°C, until bubbling (about 1 h 15 min).

POTATO PANCAKES (using food processor)

6 medium potatoes,
peeled

1 small onion

2 sprigs fresh parsley

5 mL salt

0.5 mL pepper

0.5 mL nutmeg

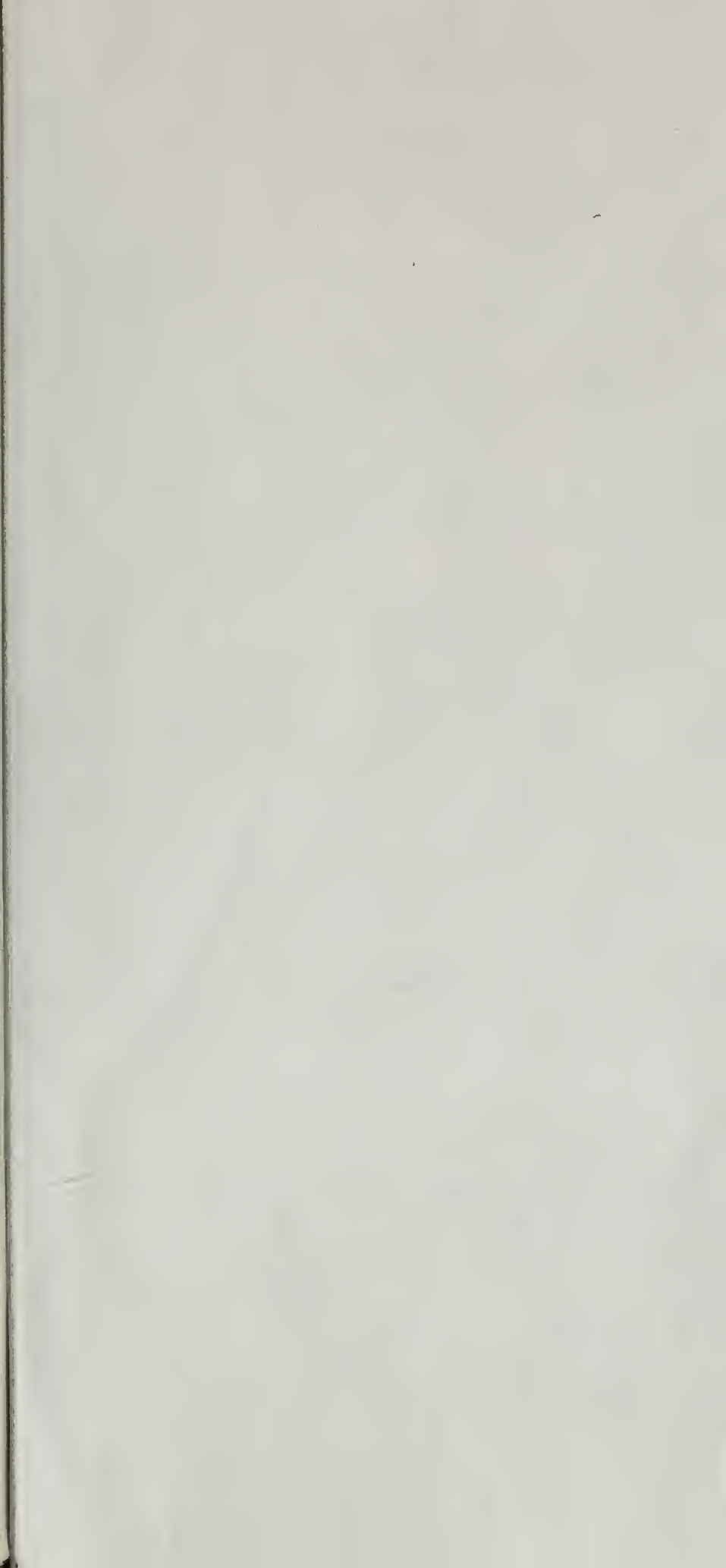
2 egg yolks

25 mL all-purpose flour

2 egg whites

25 mL oil

Grate potatoes using fine blade. Soak in ice water. Drain well. Chop onion and parsley. Add to potatoes with seasonings and egg yolks. Mix well. Sprinkle flour over potato mixture. Process egg whites for about 1 min. Fold into potato mixture. For each pancake, spread 50 mL batter into hot oil. Cook until golden brown (about 3 min each side). Serve with warm applesauce or chili sauce, if desired. 6 servings.



MICROWAVE WINTER VEGETABLES

500 mL sliced carrot	125 mL chopped onion
500 mL diced, peeled potatoes	7 mL salt
	0.5 mL pepper
250 mL rutabaga cut in julienne strips	1 package (300 g) frozen chopped spinach
125 mL water	
50 mL butter or margarine	

Combine first 4 ingredients in 2.5 L glass baking dish. Cover and microwave at full power until vegetables are almost tender (about 15 min), stirring every 3 min. Drain. Add remaining ingredients. Cover and microwave at full power 6 min more, stirring after 3 min. Let stand 3 min before serving. 6 servings.

SUMMER VEGETABLE POT Substitute 1 medium sliced zucchini for rutabaga, 175 mL sliced green onion for chopped onion and 1 package (284 g) fresh spinach for frozen spinach. At full power, microwave carrot and potato in water until almost tender, stirring every 2 min (about 14 min). Drain. Add remaining ingredients, cover and microwave at full power, stirring after 2 min. Let stand 3 min. 6 servings.

CHINESE-STYLE BAKED POTATOES

500 mL sliced mushrooms (about 250 g)	15 mL soy sauce
125 mL sliced green pepper	15 mL oil
125 mL chopped onions	2 mL sugar
1 clove garlic, crushed	5 mL freshly grated ginger root
25 mL oil	6 baked potatoes
2 tomatoes, chopped	
1 can (199 mL) kernel corn, drained	

Stir-fry first 4 ingredients in oil until tender-crisp. Add tomatoes and corn and stir-fry for 3 min more. Add soy sauce, oil, sugar and ginger root and heat through. Cut potatoes almost in half lengthwise, and top each potato with vegetable mixture. 6 servings.

REUBEN SPUDS

For each serving, cut baked potato almost in half lengthwise. Fluff potato with fork. Top with 50 mL corned beef, cut in julienne strips, 50 mL sauerkraut and 50 mL shredded Swiss cheese. Bake at 180°C until cheese melts (about 10 min). Serve with mustard, if desired. 1 serving.

SLOPPY SPUDS

250 mL chopped onion	5 mL salt
125 mL chopped green pepper	5 mL chili powder
125 mL sliced mushrooms	5 mL oregano
25 mL oil	0.5 mL ground cloves
500 g ground beef	1 mL pepper
1 can (398 mL) tomato sauce	6 baked potatoes

Sauté onion, green pepper and mushrooms in oil until onion is transparent. Add beef and brown. Drain off excess fat. Add remaining ingredients except potatoes. Simmer, uncovered, for 30 min. Cut baked potatoes almost in half lengthwise. Fluff potato with fork. Top each potato with sauce. 6 servings.

MEXICAN POTATO PUFFS

750 mL mashed potatoes	2 mL dry mustard
3 beaten eggs	15 mL grated onion
5 mL chili powder	10 mL milk
0.5 mL cayenne pepper	175 mL grated cheddar cheese
5 mL salt	175 mL dry bread crumbs

Combine all ingredients except cheese and bread crumbs. Combine cheese and crumbs in blender until fine. Add 250 mL to potato mixture. Shape 25 mL amounts in balls. Roll in remaining crumb mixture. Deep-fat fry at 195°C until golden brown. Drain. Makes about 40 puffs.

TO FREEZE Deep-fat fry at 195°C for 1 min. Chill well. May be frozen up to 1 month.

TO REHEAT Thaw puffs and bake at 180°C until golden brown (about 15 min).

STOVE-TOP QUICHE

25 mL butter or margarine	6 eggs
500 mL diced cooked potato	25 mL milk
250 mL finely chopped ham	5 mL salt
175 mL finely chopped green onion	1 mL pepper
125 mL finely chopped green pepper	50 mL chopped fresh parsley
	OR 15 mL dried
	250 mL (100 g) grated Swiss cheese

Melt butter or margarine in 25 cm fry pan. Sauté next 4 ingredients for 3 min. Combine eggs, milk and seasonings. Pour over potato mixture. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook until set (12 to 15 min). Sprinkle cheese over eggs. Broil 8 cm from heat until cheese melts. To serve, cut in wedges. 6 servings.

PEROGIES

Filling

500 mL mashed potatoes	125 mL grated cheddar cheese
10 mL grated onion	5 mL salt
15 mL butter or margarine	0.5 mL pepper

Combine all ingredients. Chill.

Dough

1 egg	25 mL oil
7 mL salt	1 L all-purpose flour
350 mL lukewarm water	

Combine first 4 ingredients. Gradually add flour to make soft dough. Shape in ball and place in greased bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let stand at room temperature for 1½ h. Roll dough thinly and cut in 10 cm rounds. Place 15 mL filling in center of dough. Fold over. Pinch to seal edges. Place on floured tea towel. Cover to prevent drying. Drop into boiling salted water and cook for 9 min. Drain. Keep warm. Makes about 36 perogies.

Topping

500 mL sliced onions	50 mL melted butter or margarine
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Sauté onions in butter until golden brown (about 20 min). Serve over perogies. Top with sour cream, if desired.

SALMON VICHYSOISE*

1 can (440 g) salmon	25 mL butter or margarine
Water	25 mL flour
250 mL cubed potatoes	250 mL milk
125 mL sliced leeks	250 mL chicken broth
250 mL diced celery	25 mL finely chopped chives
2 mL salt	
0.5 mL white pepper	

Drain salmon, reserving juice. Remove skin. Combine salmon juice with water to make 1 L. Bring to a boil. Add vegetables and seasonings. Simmer until tender. Add salmon. Purée in blender. Melt butter or margarine, add flour, stir in milk and chicken broth. Cook until smooth. Add to purée and reheat. Serve garnished with chives. 8 servings.

* Recipe provided by Fisheries Food Centre, Fisheries and Oceans, Ottawa, K1A 0E6.

STUFFED MICROWAVE BAKED POTATOES

Use baked potatoes, cut in half.

Ingredient	1 potato (2 halves)	2 potatoes (4 halves)	6 potatoes (12 halves)
Butter or margarine	5 mL	10 mL	25 mL
Salt	Dash	Dash	Dash
Pepper	Dash	Dash	Dash
Milk	15 mL	25 mL	100 mL
Cheddar cheese, grated	25 mL	50 mL	125 mL
Green onion, chopped	5 mL	10 mL	25 mL

Carefully scoop cooked potato out of shells. Mash with butter or margarine, salt, pepper, and milk. Stir in cheddar cheese and green onion. Stuff potato shells with mixture. Microwave at full power for the time indicated.

Number of potatoes	Microwave cooking time (min)
1 (2 halves)	2
2 (4 halves)	3
6 (12 halves)	6-7

TO STORE May be stored in refrigerator for 1 h before reheating.

TO REHEAT Microwave at full power for 1 min longer than above cooking times.

KITCHEN METRICS

Most commonly used oven temperatures

°C	replaces °F	°C	replaces °F
100	200	190	375
150	300	200	400
160	325	220	425
180	350	230	450

Refrigerator temperature: 4°C replaces 40°F

Freezer temperature: -18°C replaces 0°F

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